

INFORMATION AND ADVICE

CAMPYLOBACTER INFECTIONS

DIRECTION DE SANTÉ PUBLIQUE

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UNDERSTANDING

Campylobacter is widespread in birds, which are known to contaminate lakes and streams. Wild animals, domestic animals and farms animals including chicken and cattle can also be infected by *Campylobacter*, as can unpasteurized milk.

HOW MAY A PERSON BE INFECTED BY CAMPYLOBACTER ?

Via contaminated food or water :

- By eating undercooked meat or poultry.
- By drinking unpasteurized milk – usually directly from a farm – as opposed to milk sold commercially, which is pasteurized.
- By eating food that has been contaminated during its preparation. This can occur when the same utensils, especially cutting boards, are used first for uncooked meat, and then for food that is to be eaten raw.
- By drinking untreated water (from lakes or streams).

Via contact with the stools of an infected person or animal :

- An infected person who does not wash his or her hands properly – especially in the presence of diarrhea – may spread the infection to another person.
- A person who changes the diapers of a baby with a *Campylobacter* infection may become contaminated him or herself.
- The parasite may also be present in the stools of domestic or wild animals. A person who has touched infected animals or cleaned out their cages is therefore at risk of acquiring the infection himself or herself.

HOW CAN I HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF CAMPYLOBACTER INFECTIONS ?

- a) You must wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water :
 - After each bowel movement, especially if you have diarrhea. After changing a child's diaper or touching an animal.
 - Before and after eating, handling food and/or handling cooking utensils.
- b) Refrigerate meats as soon as possible after buying them.
- c) Cook all meats and poultry products at temperatures high enough to kill bacteria. You can find more information at : https://www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca/fr/Publications/MAPAQ_guide_consommateur.pdf
- d) Wash knives, other utensils, such as cutting boards, and your hands when switching from one food to another. Clean and disinfect high touched surfaces regularly.
- e) Do not drink unpasteurized milk.
- f) Avoid drinking untreated water (from lakes or streams). If you use well water, insure that it is tested regularly.

Source : Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux, *Prévention et contrôle des infections dans les services de garde et écoles du Québec* - Guide d'intervention édition 2015 – Dernières mises à jour de certaines sections 2025

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